



HELPFILE

PUT YOUR QUESTIONS TO OUR TECHNICAL EXPERTS

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HELPFILE

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DISPLAYS DUAL MONITORS

WATCHING TV ON DIFFERENT MONITORS

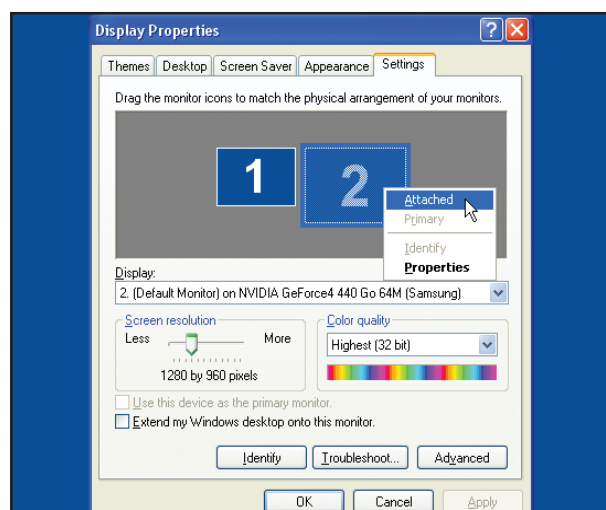
Q I have a Dell Dimension 8300 PC that is about a year old. I would like to connect two monitors to it so I can watch video and TV on one while I work on the other.

I have 512MB of memory, an Intel 3GHz processor and an nVidia GeForce FX5200 graphics card. The card has a DVI and a normal VGA output on the back. Does this mean that I can connect two monitors directly or do I need to add a second graphics card to drive the second monitor?

Neil Wimalasundera,
neil_wim@hotmail.com

A Some graphics cards with analogue and digital outputs can be used with only one monitor at a time, but other cards support both outputs simultaneously. All recent GeForce chipsets are designed to support two monitors. You can either use one analogue and one digital display, or get a DVI-to-VGA adaptor to use two analogue monitors.

Although an nVidia chipset might support dual monitors, the manufacturer of the display card that uses the chip may have chosen not to implement this feature. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to find out the exact specification of the FX5200 cards fitted by Dell. Some users report no problems running dual monitors with a Dell-supplied FX5200 card, but others have been unable to get it to work. Perhaps Dell changed suppliers and specifications.



Tick Extend my Windows desktop to this monitor to use two screens at once

After plugging in the second monitor, you should be able to right-click on the desktop, choose Properties, click the Settings tab, click on the second monitor and tick the Extend my Windows desktop to this monitor option. Users of older computers may need to update their drivers. The nVidia nView software supports multiple displays and is bundled with its Forceware drivers, release 60 and later.

Recent Dell laptops will support dual monitors, using their LCD screen and an external display simultaneously. If your display card won't support dual monitors, replace it with one that does or add a second display card to one of the PCI slots. XP will support either method. Conflicts are less likely if you use one card designed for dual displays, particularly if you are using an older version of Windows.

CONTACTING HELPFILE

EMAIL PAUL MULLEN AT:

helpfile@computershopper.co.uk

WRITE TO:

Helpfile,
Computer Shopper,
30 Cleveland Street,
London W1T 4JD

When writing to *Helpfile*, please try to give full details of your problem. We also require both daytime and evening phone numbers in case we need more information. Although the policy of *Computer Shopper* is not to publish readers' email addresses, we include them in *Helpfile* so that other readers with experience of similar problems can share their solution (please also cc any comments to helpfile@computershopper.co.uk). If you would prefer not to have your email address published, please say so.

PAUL MULLEN

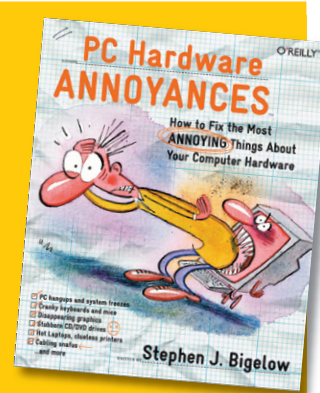
Paul has been a transport demand forecaster, economic adviser to the government and IT consultant to many big companies, and has been using and writing software for personal computers since 1978

helpfile@computershopper.co.uk



PC Hardware Annoyances

If you send our star letter, you'll receive a prize. This month's winner gets a copy of O'Reilly's *PC Hardware Annoyances*, which will help you fix any number of hardware problems. If you don't want to spend the rest of your life troubleshooting, make sure you keep this next to your PC along with the latest copy of *Computer Shopper*. Your PC woes will disappear.





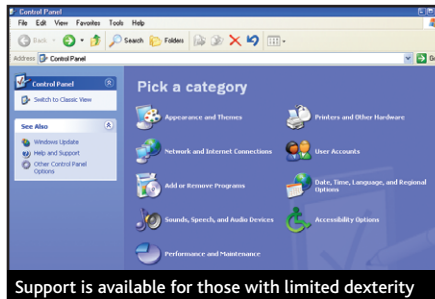
ACCESSIBILITY KEYBOARD CONTROL

CONTROLLING WINDOWS WITH ONE FINGER

Q I've been living on my own for a year, but I was living in a home for 16 years before that. When I used computers at the home, they had a program that helped me because I can only use the index finger on my right hand. Can you help, as I'm having a computer delivered tomorrow?

Sue Allen, sueallen@amsolve.com

A We think the software you need is already included with Windows XP. If you can manage a mouse, click Start or press the Windows key, which is usually near the bottom left of new keyboards, then Settings. If you can't use a mouse, just press S until this option is highlighted,



then press Enter. Select Control Panel and you'll see an Accessibility icon. Click that, or press the Tab key until it's highlighted, then follow the menus.

You need an option called StickyKeys, which enables you to simulate pressing keys simultaneously. Rather than having to press the Ctrl, Alt or Shift key at the same time as another key, which you can't do with one finger, you can use this feature to select the keys you need one at a time.

If using the mouse is difficult, try a feature called MouseKeys. This allows you to move the mouse pointer with the arrow keys on the numeric keypad. It is also possible to use the letter keys to select items from menus. You need to press the Alt key and a letter key to open a menu, or the Tab key to move from one field to another in most programs. Pressing the Shift key five times can often switch StickyKeys on.

SECURITY FROZEN SETTINGS

INTERNET EXPLORER OPTIONS ARE RESTRICTED



Q I am unable to use the Internet Options of Internet Explorer. When I click Tools then Options I get this message: "The operation has been cancelled due to restrictions in effect on this computer. Please contact your system administrator." But I am the system administrator. I just want to change the home page. I recently changed my ISP, but Internet Explorer insists on using the old one.

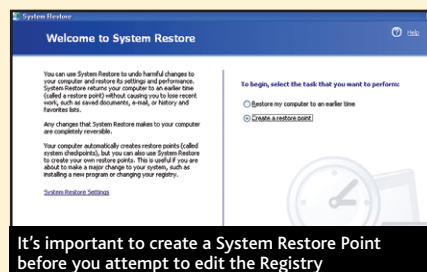
Robert Nuttall, pitfold982000@yahoo.co.uk

A Before listing reasons for this restriction, you should know that Microsoft intended this message to be shown to people working in large companies. Their system administrators use a tool called the IE Administrator's Kit (IEAK). This exists so companies can control the settings of Internet Explorer. It is also used by ISPs to produce a customised version of Internet Explorer. Your message refers to the administrator of all the systems in a company.

There are several ways this restriction can come about, though, and they don't all include system administrators. Spyware can mess with your Internet Explorer settings and prevent you changing them. If you use Spybot Search & Destroy, you can use the optional Immunize feature, which restricts access to your settings. Maybe you've already used it, which would explain why your browser is locked. Run Spybot, go to the Immunize option and scroll down to the bottom. There should be a line called Lock IE control panel against opening from IE. If this option is checked, it will produce exactly the symptoms you experience. It is a good idea to set this again after making the changes you want.

Someone with access to your PC may have used the IEAK or Windows XP Professional Edition's Group Policy, which is a part of Windows that can impose similar restrictions. It can also be used to restrict which programs you can run.

Finally, there have been reports of some spyware programs setting this restriction to make it harder for users to undo the changes they make. If this is the case, your home page will probably have been set to something that you didn't choose.



It's important to create a System Restore Point before you attempt to edit the Registry

If you can't work out what's to blame, remove the restrictions with the Registry editor. If you aren't familiar with Registry editing, create a System Restore Point first. In XP, click Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools and System Restore. Click Create a Restore Point, give it a description and click Create. This creates a system snapshot you can restore if your Registry changes cause problems.

Once you have created a Restore point, click Start, Run and type Regedit.exe then click OK. Open the Registry keys by clicking the + sign to the left of each entry, which expands the entries beneath it.

There are several keys that could be used to impose this restriction. First look under HKey_Current_User, Software, Policies, Microsoft, Internet Explorer, Restrictions. If you find a key called NoBrowserOptions you can delete it or change its value from 1 (on) to 0 (off). Also look for a similarly named key under HKey_Local_Machine.

A restriction could be set under HKey_Current_User, Software, Policies, Microsoft, Internet Explorer, Control Panel, or through a similar path but starting from HKey_Local_Machine. In this case, change the value to 0. This disables the restriction; 1 enables it.

If you can remove the restrictions but they return after the next reboot, you probably have some nasty spyware lurking on your PC.

OTHER THINGS TO TRY

IF YOUR IE OPTIONS ARE STILL RESTRICTED, THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO FIX THE PROBLEM

Your problem may have been caused because the inetctl.cpl or inetcpcl.dll file is missing. In Windows 2000 or XP, these files should be in the %SystemRoot%\System32 folder, where %SystemRoot% is Windows or WinNT. In Windows 95, 98 or Me, these files should be in the Windows\System folder.

If these files are missing and you have upgraded Internet Explorer over the version that came with Windows, the easiest way to repair it is from the Add/Remove Programs box of Control Panel. However, if you haven't installed an update, Internet Explorer won't be listed there because it is an integral part of Windows that cannot be removed. If it isn't listed in Add/Remove programs, you could instead look for a program called IE6Setup.exe in Program Files\Internet Explorer.

If this program isn't there either, go to Start and search for filenames containing 'inetctl'.

You should find inetctl.cp_ and inetcpcl.dl_ in a folder called i386. These are compressed versions of the original files that came with Windows. There may also be a later version in folders such as Windows\Servicepackfiles\i386. Make sure you get the latest version. If the filename is the same as the file you were looking for, simply copy it to the appropriate folder. If it ends with an underscore character, it is compressed and will have to be restored using the Expand command. Open a command prompt and type in a command such as:

```
Expand C:\i386\inetctl.cp_ C:\Windows\System32
```

The first parameter is the file you wish to extract and the second is the folder in which it should be placed. Be careful to use the correct version.



DISPLAY 3D PCI GRAPHICS

WANTED: A GRAPHICS CARD FOR STAR WARS LEGO

Q My uncle has bought me the Star Wars Lego game for my fifth birthday. My daddy has a new Dell Dimension 3000 PC running Windows XP, but the program will not work because my daddy did not buy a separate sound or graphics card. The game says it needs a graphics card that is 100 per cent DirectX 9-compatible, has 64MB Direct3D with Pixel Shader 1.1 support and a sound card that is 100 per cent DirectX 9-compatible.

I do not have much pocket money, so I want the cheapest way of running my game.

Jacob Neller (aged 5), mark.neller@btinternet.com

A Unfortunately the Dimension 3000, which is a great value computer, is not intended as a gaming computer. In order to keep costs down, Dell designed it with sound and

video built into the motherboard and there is no AGP slot to add a graphics card.

The integrated graphics use an Intel Extreme Graphics 2 processor, which is part of the motherboard's Intel 865GV chipset. This is great for browsing the internet or running office applications, but as far as playing games is concerned, it sucks. Integrated graphics don't usually have their own memory but borrow the

computer's main memory instead. ▼ Use the force when selecting a graphics card

This system allows you to use up to 32MB of memory only. Also, it has no support for Pixel Shader. In fact, it fully supports only the old DirectX 7 standard.

To use games that require DirectX 9, you will need to add a graphics

card. However, if you have no accelerated graphics port (AGP) slot, you are limited to using a PCI-based card. Most of those suffer from the same limitations as your motherboard chipset. You should look for a card based on the Radeon 9200 or GeForce FX5200 chipsets. The FX5200-based cards are faster but power hungry and cost more. A card based on the Radeon 9100 would be ideal. Don't

buy a PCI Express card by mistake, as they won't fit your system.

We can't determine whether the built-in audio hardware is compatible with DirectX 9. If you download DirectX 9 from www.microsoft.com/directx – or load it from the game CD – you can run the DirectX diagnostic tool to check the compatibility.



SECURITY REMOVING IE6

STOP USERS RUNNING INTERNET EXPLORER 6

Q I have a six-month-old PC, and following a *Shopper* recommendation I installed the Firefox browser. But I sometimes think my PC is being used by other people via Internet Explorer. Sometimes one of my email addresses receives messages from another of my email addresses. I know I have not sent these messages.

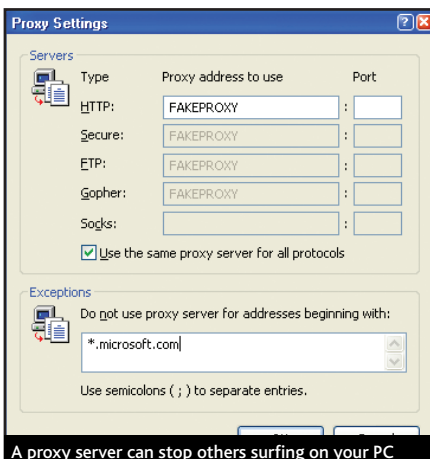
I wish to remove Internet Explorer 6, but it is not listed in my Control Panel Install/Remove list. If I delete the .exe file from the program folder it appears again almost immediately. How can I remove IE6, or is there just a way to ensure that it cannot be used by anyone else?

Brain Deller, bjdeller@spainvia.com

A If other people were using your computer, they wouldn't be using Internet Explorer. They would have installed some kind of remote control Trojan or backdoor. But that does not explain what is happening here. The sender field in an email is easy to fake, and it is common for viruses and senders of spam to put someone else's address on the mail. Check the headers of the email to see whether the email was sent from your IP address. For more details on this, see our Factfile on page 224.

Microsoft designed Windows so you can't remove Internet Explorer. Many parts of the operating system use Internet Explorer components and, as you have found, you can delete iexplore.exe but Windows just recreates it. The same happens even if you replace iexplore.exe with another file.

There are ways to remove Internet Explorer completely, but we don't recommend them as you still need Internet Explorer to download Windows Updates. If you use a broadband connection, you're better off disabling IE by setting a fake proxy server. This is useful if other people use your computer and you are afraid that you might get infected with



spyware. A proxy server is used on shared internet connections to keep a local copy of web pages.

Normally Internet Explorer asks the proxy server for a web page. If that's the first request for that page, the proxy server gets it from the web. If others in the same organisation have asked for the page, the proxy server can check the page has not changed and give the requestor a copy of the page without going to the web for it.

Open Internet Options using the Tools menu in Internet Explorer or via the Control Panel. Then click on the Connections tab. Click the LAN Settings button and you will see a box marked Use a proxy server. Tick this box and type in a fake name such as FAKEPROXY. Click on the Advanced button and under Exceptions enter *.microsoft.com. Because the proxy server cannot be found, you will be unable to go to any websites except those that you added to the Exceptions list. Including *.microsoft.com as an exception allows you to access Windows Updates.

You can make it harder for anyone to undo this change by using Spybot's Immunize feature to block access to Internet Options.

STORAGE IDE DRIVES

OPTICAL DRIVE CONFUSION

Q My PC came with a CD-RW drive and a DVD drive. I removed the CD-RW and replaced it with a DVD-RW drive and everything worked OK. Then I decided that I would like two drives that could write, so I replaced the original DVD drive with the old CD-RW. Now the PC says, "Replace boot disk in order to start". Is there a way I can keep both these drives and still have an operational PC?

Tom Harris, deadzone_10@hotmail.com

A You probably forgot to change a jumper setting on one of the optical drives. For two IDE devices to share an IDE ribbon cable, one must be set up as the Master and the other as the Slave. Each device has small plastic clips called jumpers that can be inserted on to tiny pins on the back of the drive. The pins you put the jumper on determine whether the drive is set to be a Master or Slave. There is usually a diagram on your drive.

The additional Cable Select setting should set the device at the end of the cable as Master and the one connected to the middle as Slave, so you needn't reconfigure jumper settings if you move a drive. However, Cable Select works only with the right kind of cable. Most newer 80-pin IDE cables support it, but you may find setting the jumpers to Master and Slave more reliable.

Since the PC cannot boot from the hard disk, you must have changed something that affects the hard drive. Does one of these drives share a ribbon cable with your hard disk? If you attached a device that was also set as Master, it could prevent the hard disk being recognised. Set the other device that shares a cable with the hard drive as a Slave.



STORAGE DISK CHECKING

DEFRAG REQUIRES CHKDSK BUT IT WON'T RUN

Q My computer is running slowly so I ran Defragmenter to try to improve the performance. This returned the message: "Disk Defragmenter has detected Chkdsk is scheduled to run on Volume C: Please run Chkdsk/f."

When I run Chkdsk from the command prompt, I get the message, "The type of File system is NTFS. Cannot lock current drive. Chkdsk cannot run because the volume is in use by another process. Would you like to schedule the volume to be checked the next time the system restarts? Y/N." Entering Y makes no difference to the problem.

Must I buy a new hard disk or even a new computer? I am running Windows XP, which has functioned well in the past.

Gibson Moore, gibsonmoore@doctors.org.uk

A Presumably C: is your system drive. Windows XP opens files on the system drive with exclusive access, and this

prevents Chkdsk running. So when you try and run Chkdsk you are correctly told it can't run but it will offer to run Chkdsk next time you restart your computer. When you restart, Chkdsk runs before Windows fully loads.

To confirm that drive C: is scheduled for checking, open a command prompt and type `chkntfs C:` – this should tell you the drive is 'dirty', which is the programmer's way of saying a disk needs to be checked. It may say that it has been scheduled for a check on the next reboot. Other `chkntfs` options set a drive to be checked or exclude it from checking. Type `chkntfs /?` for details.

When you restart your computer, you should see a light blue screen that says one of your disk drives needs checking for errors. You can press a key to avoid checking the hard disk. If you don't press a key, Chkdsk should run, which is exactly what you want to happen.

This process is controlled by a program called `Autochk.exe`. You'll find this in the Windows\System32 folder. If you don't see a screen saying that

one of your drives needs checking, it's probably because this file is missing. A virus called Fagot or Petch deletes this, along with other critical Windows files.

You should also check the Registry. From Start, Run type in `RegEdit` and click OK. Navigate to `HKey_Local_Machine, System, CurrentControlSet, Control, Session Manager`. This should contain a key called `BootExecute` with the value `autocheck autochk *`.

If this doesn't help, go to Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs and try removing Windows XP Hotfix KB824105. Reports on the internet have suggested that under certain circumstances this patch prevents Autochk running.

If that doesn't solve the problem, you can still run Defrag. You should first use `chkntfs /d` to clear the 'dirty' flag. But running defrag is inadvisable if the drive really does have problems. You can also boot to Recovery Console from a Windows XP CD and run Chkdsk from there. Ultimately, reinstalling Windows could be the only solution.

FEEDBACK WINDOWS XP

WINDOWS XP WON'T SHUT DOWN

Q I have exactly the same problem as Shaun Leggott, who couldn't shut down Windows XP (*Helpfile, Shopper* July 2005). Mine kept restarting, too. I tried all your suggestions when I read his letter and your reply. I still haven't solved the problem, but I have found a way around it.

When I click the Turn Off Computer button and I see the panel with the icons Stand By, Turn Off and Restart, I press Enter instead of clicking

on the Turn Off icon. The computer shuts down properly. I can press Alt-U for the same effect. I have no idea why this works.

Jim France, jimcatherine@france-09.fsnet.co.uk

A Curious. We're not sure why that works, either, but it's possibly something to do with mouse drivers. There are known problems involving Windows XP with Service Pack 2 rebooting endlessly if certain USB mice are used.

FEEDBACK BASIC ALTERNATIVES

DELPHI LINUX

Q In 'A Better Language than Basic', *Helpfile, Shopper* July 2005, you said Delphi "is never likely to be ported to Linux". Haven't you heard of Borland's Kylix, its version of Delphi for Linux? It was introduced in 2001 and is now on version 3. It also supports C++. See www.borland.com/kylix, and download the Open Edition for free.

John Matthews, jm5678@gmail.com

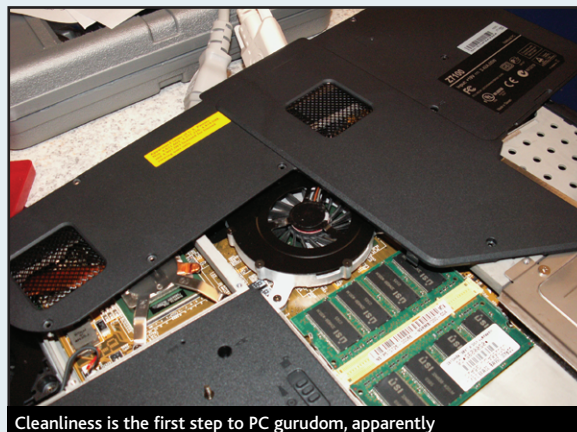
FEEDBACK DUSTY PCs

CLEANLINESS IS THE KEY

Q A while ago I was on the point of writing to you with a desperate plea for help. Then a miracle happened and I thought I'd share it with you.

My desktop computer, which has an AMD processor, 256MB RAM, Windows XP and Office XP, kept crashing. Sometimes it would crash every few minutes, sometimes once a day.

Having decided to work through the box and replace everything, I started with the cheapest component and worked my way up. The motherboard would only be worth £25 or thereabouts, so I took the side off the case to get at the processor to see its name and number. When I removed the processor's fan, I found a carpet of dust between the fan and the heat sink. I removed the dust and found the details of the chip, put everything back and talked to the motherboard supplier. The following day I noticed that the computer wasn't crashing. It hasn't crashed since.



Cleanliness is the first step to PC gurdum, apparently

That would have been the end of the story, but for my notebook. This has a Pentium 4 processor, 512MB of RAM and various applications. When processor usage reached

100 per cent, the processor fan would run constantly and the system would crash and shut down.

After a few weeks of wondering what I'd done to cause this, I figured maybe it was also suffering from a carpet of dust. I was unwilling to start poking around inside the notebook, so I got the vacuum cleaner and sucked out all the dust that had clogged up the vent holes on the bottom and sides of the laptop base. I immediately ran an application that I was certain would crash the notebook. While

the processor did run up to 100 per cent, the fan was quiet and the crash never came. Since then, everything has worked fine. Dust is the enemy!

Duncan Williamson, duncan@duncanwil.co.uk

FACTFILE

TRACKING UNWANTED EMAILS

YOU'VE GOT AN EMAIL THAT CONTAINS A VIRUS OR SPAM AND YOU WANT TO KNOW ITS ORIGIN – BUT IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SENT BY YOU! WE EXPLAIN THE MYSTERY OF SPOOFED EMAIL ADDRESSES

Q I often get spam and viruses sent to my email account. I also get spam from people whose email addresses appear in my address book. I think I may have some spyware on my computer, but I performed a scan with Microsoft AntiSpyware and Spyware Doctor from a recent cover DVD and I was unable to find anything at all.

Today I received an email from an address that I didn't recognise. But the subject line contained the exact same text that I had written in an email I sent earlier in the day. I cannot blame this on spyware as I sent the email from my email account on my work computer, which also doesn't appear to have any spyware.

Please could you explain to me just how spam and spyware works and how the spammers know these details. I never click any pop-ups that could install spyware.

Rob Goldstein, motki1@yahoo.com

A Computer writers have classified nuisances into different categories: viruses, spyware and spam. Unfortunately, at the moment you need completely different software products to deal with each threat. By and large, anti-virus programs do not deal with most spyware and anti-spyware programs do not deal with most viruses.

VIRUSES

It sounds as if the emails you are complaining about are being sent by a virus. A lot of computers have been infected by recent variants of Sober and similar viruses, which search the infected computer for email addresses and use one email from the list of collected addresses in the Sender field of the emails they send out. Emails sent by viruses usually use a limited set of subjects. The most rapidly spreading variant claims to be an error message from your mail system administrator, which aims to fool users into clicking on the attachment.

You need an anti-virus program or the free online scanner at <http://housecall.trendmicro.com>. Recently I came across a couple of different viruses that can hide themselves from anti-virus programs. I suggest that you restart your computer and press F8 repeatedly before Windows loads. You should see a menu of boot choices. Select Safe Mode with Networking. This mode prevents most viruses running but still allows you to get online and access the Trend online scanner.

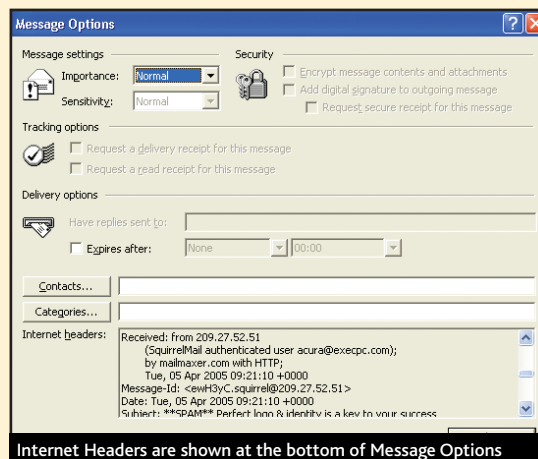
Although it is uncommon, there are reports of viruses copying the subject line of an email that has been sent. By using a familiar subject, the virus is trying to trick you into opening the email. In this case, it could be the sending or receiving computer that is infected by the virus.

SPAM

There is a link between viruses and spam. The Sober family of viruses appear to have been written with the aim of taking control of a large number of computers, which can then be used to send spam. Recently a torrent of neo-Nazi propaganda, in English

and German, was sent out using virus-infected computers. The reason was probably to demonstrate the effectiveness of the technique.

We don't know exactly how the hijacked computers are used, but the virus does collect email addresses and we do know that infected computers have been used to send spam. It is also likely that they have been used to harvest email addresses for future use by spammers. Other traditional sources of email addresses used by spammers are email addresses posted on web pages and emails submitted to websites that sell their mail lists or have them stolen by hackers. Some hackers specialise in breaking into websites and stealing email lists that they sell to spammers.



Internet Headers are shown at the bottom of Message Options

To find out more about the techniques spammers use, read *Inside the Spam Cartel* by Spammer-X, published by Syngress.

LOOKING FOR CLUES

The From: field of spam is often forged. To see where the email came from, you have to look for clues in the email headers, specifically those called Received. These are normally hidden by default and each email client has a different way of displaying them. Even different versions of the same program may have different ways of viewing headers:

Outlook 2000/2002/2003 Open the message, then right-click on it and choose Options. The Internet Headers are shown at the bottom of the Message Options window.

Outlook Express 6 Right-click on the message, select Properties then click the Details tab. Choose Message source to see the headers. In older versions, you can just click Details.

Netscape Messenger/Mozilla Thunderbird Click View then Headers and select All.

Eudora Open the email and click the button on the toolbar called **Blah Blah Blah**.

Pegasus Mail Click the Raw View tab or press Ctrl-H.

Lotus Notes Right-click on the message and select Document Properties. Next click on the Fields tab, which is the second tab. Then click on each Received item. To the right you can view header information.

Hotmail Click Options and when the screen loads, scroll down and click Preferences. Under Other Hotmail Options find Message Headers and select Advanced. Click OK and return to your inbox.

Yahoo! Go to Options, select Mail Preferences, scroll down and select All under the Message Headers field.

Gmail Click on More Options then Show Original.

In all cases, you will see several Received: lines. These are added by each mail server that receives the message, which will usually pass through at least two mail servers including one at the sender's ISP and your ISP. There may be

other received lines too. Each Received: line records a point where the message moved from one server to another, listing details of each. The original sender of the message will be listed at the bottom.

Here is an example of a Received: header from an infected computer:

```
Received: from ppp-82-84-128-200.cust-adsl.tiscali.it (HELO the-answer.com) (82.84.128.200) by theta.pair.com with SMTP; 7 Jun 2005 16:35:26 -0000
```

The HELO part shows the name the sending mail (SMTP) server used to identify itself. This is easy to forge. A typical virus trick is to use the same domain name as the one in the target's email address. It's more reliable to look at the system's IP address. Here the sending system has a long name that includes the sender's IP address and concludes with adsl.tiscali.it, which makes it clear that the email was sent from a computer connected to an ADSL line run by Tiscali in Italy.

The virus has been sent from an infected computer, which must have your email address on it somewhere. You may be able to guess the owner of the computer, especially if you don't know too many people in Italy. To confirm who it is, you can look at the headers of a recent genuine email from that person. Although the IP addresses of dial-up users change each time they connect, ADSL lines usually keep the same IP address for weeks at a time.

I'm not aware of an email program that allows you to search your email for a particular IP address but, if you use an email program that stores your mail on the hard disk, Windows can search all the files on the hard disk for you. This isn't ideal, because most mail programs store your email in huge files that contain unreadable binary information. However, you can then open the file by holding down the Shift key while right-clicking on it, then choosing WordPad as the program to open that file. WordPad can search through the file to find the IP address you are looking for. Just ignore unreadable portions of the binary files.



WINDOWS INSTABILITY

CHANGING SETTINGS CRASHES SECOND-HAND PC

Q I recently bought a second-hand computer that is running Windows Me. Whenever I try to change a setting, configure my broadband or make any sort of configuration change, I get the following messages:

Windows cannot find 'C:\WINDOWS\rundll32.exe'
Windows has caused an error in KERNEL32.DLL

Unfortunately, System Restore is a non-starter. When I tried installing my broadband connection, this problem came up again and I couldn't go into Network Properties. When I tried, I got an Autolt Error (Line:2) error. Do you have any idea what's going on?

Victor Mvere, vikta96@yahoo.co.uk

A Rundll.exe and Rundll32.exe are important components of Windows. They are needed to load many system library files called Dynamic Link Libraries (DLLs). Unfortunately, there are many viruses and

Trojans that hope to confuse users by also calling themselves Rundll.exe or Rundll32.exe.

The real Windows files on Windows 95, 98 and Me are found in the Windows folder, and Windows XP stores them in the System32 folder. Several viruses use the same filename but place it in a different location. Some very nasty products, notably CoolWebSearch (CWS), replace the genuine Windows files with their own files. It is possible a previous user deleted the real Windows file thinking it was a virus, or the computer is infected by a version of CWS that has deleted this file.

The second error probably mentions a program called AutoIT. This is a scripting application used to run some network setup tasks. It can be removed from the Control Panel.

From the symptoms you describe, it sounds as if it would be better to install a completely fresh copy of Windows. The system may be badly infected with spyware or viruses. If you didn't get a Windows Me CD with the computer, don't worry. Hopefully there will be a copy of the files needed to reinstall Windows in a folder. This might be called \Windows\Options\Cabs, \Windows\Options\Install or just \Win9X. This folder should have a large number of big files with names ending in .cab,

plus a Setup.exe file and other programs. If you have such a folder, you can install a new copy of Windows and delete the old one.

Before reinstalling Windows, make sure you know your CD key. This should be on a Microsoft licence sticker on the side of the computer. If not, you can run RegEdit and look in HKey_Local_Machine, Software, Microsoft, Windows, CurrentVersion, ProductKey. Create a startup floppy from Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs before you start.

Alternatively, you can repair your copy of Windows. There is a feature in Windows Me that restores corrupt or missing system files. To use it, click on Start, Run and type in Msconfig then click OK. On the bottom left of the General tab you should see a button marked Launch System Restore. However, there is a chance that this may not work.

Finally, you could ask someone else with Windows Me to send you the missing Rundll.exe file. It is very small. You can also download it from www.richardthelionhearted.com/~merijn/winfiles.html. When you fix this file, however, you may find other problems. A clean install is possibly the best way to go.

FEEDBACK ADSL BROADBAND

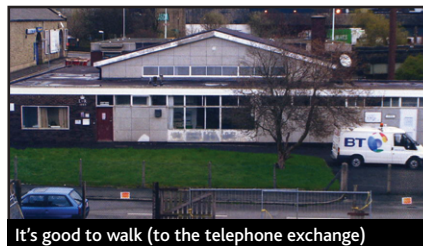
FAST FIX FOR SLOW DIAL-UP



Many thanks for the reply to my letter 'Fast Fix With ADSL Broadband' (Helpfile, Shopper July 2005). It made for very interesting reading. The attached photo file will show you just how far away I live from my telephone exchange. This is the view from my attic window.

Colin Kay, sandgrown42@fsmail.net

A Obviously distance wasn't the cause of your slow dial-up speeds, but sometimes phone lines don't run by the most obvious route. We're fairly sure that bridged taps



It's good to walk (to the telephone exchange)

are the cause. There might be three or four miles of unterminated cable attached to your short phone line.

DVD PLAYER ERRORS

POWERDVD WON'T RUN

Q I have a problem with my PowerDVD player. I get an Error Code 8901000F message and am told to contact powerdvd@gocyberlink.com, but I have had no response. Could you give me some advice please?

Graham Freer, greer79@hotmail.com

A Most copies of PowerDVD are not sold or supported directly by the company but are bundled with DVD drives. You need support from the company that provided the drive. Therefore, it is a bit stupid for the software to tell you to email Cyberlink for help.

This error code indicates that the CD registration key provided with the software was entered incorrectly. Cyberlink suggests you uninstall PowerDVD. Then from the Start menu, go to Run and type in Regedit. Click OK, and once RegEdit is running click the + signs to navigate to HKey_Current_User, Software, Cyberlink. Delete any folders for PowerDVD or PDVD. Then navigate to HKey_Local_Machine, Software, Cyberlink, and delete folders for PowerDVD or PDVD.

You can then reinstall PowerDVD, but make sure you enter the key code correctly. Apparently many users accidentally add a space at the start or end of the code, which can cause this error.

WIRELESS INTERNET

WIRELESS OPTION FOR XBOX ONLINE

Q I am about to upgrade my broadband connection to a wireless one. I currently have a BT Voyager router modem that I use to run Xbox Live for my console, as well as provide my PC with internet access. Can I operate my Xbox online using the wireless connection, as well as my PC?

There will only be one PC running from the wireless connection. Ideally, I would like to be able to use this up to around 20 metres away from the wireless connection in the house, or in the garden, which means the signal would have to travel through walls. Can you also advise if this affects the connection quality?

James Rochfort, rotchy@hotmail.com

A There is a Microsoft Xbox wireless adaptor, but it is fairly expensive. We haven't seen any third-party equivalents yet. Most wireless routers also have Ethernet sockets to connect computers directly. We recommend that you continue to connect your Xbox by Ethernet cable.

You could either buy a new ADSL modem/wireless router or keep your present ADSL modem/router and just plug a wireless router or access point into it. As far as the range goes, this can be variable. Check out our complete guide to wireless networking on page 157 for details. **CS**